

CHILE SE MOVILIZA: PROTESTS AND INEQUALITY IN POST-DICTATORSHIP CHILE

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ABSTRACT
SHRUTI JAISHANKAR: CHILE SE MOVILIZA: PROTESTS AND INEQUALITY IN
POST-DICTATORSHIP CHILE
(Under the Direction of Dr. Susan Allen)

On March 11, 1990, Augusto Pinochet, one of Latin America's most infamous dictators, left office after Chileans ordered him to step down in a nationwide plebiscite. Since Pinochet harshly punished any and all dissenters, protests re-emerged in Chile as a popular form of political action. In this thesis, I examine the relationship between economic and political inequality and the frequency of protests and peaceful demonstrations in the country. I examine the theory behind why people protest, and later examine the history of individual protest movements (such as the Chilean Education Movement). Lastly, I run a regression to evaluate the relationship between GINI coefficient (a popular measure of income inequality) and the frequency of peaceful demonstrations since the end of the dictatorship. Though the regression does not indicate that there is a significant relationship between the two, survey data suggests that Chileans view protest as a legitimate and effective form of political action, and that they have little faith in the government and party system to represent their interests. Thus, I posit that Chileans protest because existing social and political infrastructures are not functioning as they should.

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INTRODUCTION

Latin America has suffered from debt crises, military dictatorships, natural disasters, and now a global recession. Countries such as Ecuador and Peru are among the hardest hit, but many reports argue that Chile has weathered its troubles fairly well. It has a stable GDP, a democratic government, and enjoys free trade with its neighbors. On the surface, Chile appears to be one of the more economically successful countries in the region, along with its neighbors Argentina and Uruguay.

Within the country, however, problems are abundant. Though Pinochet's dictatorship fell over 20 years ago, Chilean citizens still remember and are still scarred from the violence and fear that pervaded the 17 years while he was in power. The 17 years of trauma left a profound mark on Chileans, and they spent many years after the dictatorship undergoing a process of "political learning," where they "modify their political beliefs and tactics as a result of severe crises, frustrations, and dramatic changes in environment" (Bermeo 274). The dictatorship instilled in Chile a "normative legacy that favored the creation of a democracy" because the elites and masses alike no longer wanted to live under the shadow of authoritarianism. However, though Chile has come a long way since its Pinochet days, it still suffers from many social and political problems.

Vestigial memories of the dictatorship are far from the only problem Chile faces, however. Many Chileans believe that the country's worst problem is its economic, social, and political inequality. Chile has a Gini Coefficient (a number between 0 and 1 that measures inequality, 0 being perfectly equal and 1 being perfectly unequal) that measures

over 0.5, showing that income inequality is considerable. In context, this statistic caused Business Insider magazine to rank Chile as one of its 39 most unequal countries in the world (Lincoln). Chile is more unequal than the United States and many nearby countries such as Peru, Argentina, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. Chile ranked as the 16th most unequal country in the world in 2011, comparable to countries Papua New Guinea and Zambia (Lincoln).

Chile's inequality comes from a variety of factors. First, during the mid-twentieth century, Chile wavered between an economic model that favored state control of assets and a favorable balance of trade, to a privatized liberal model that relied on foreign investment. This inconsistency along with rapid liberalization was problematic, because though "liberalization programs do not in principle rule out redistributing assets for the sake of equalization... their spirit certainly goes against it" (Sheahan 9). This means that Chile's sudden switch from state control and a social safety net to Liberal policies may have caused some of the inequality still present today. Throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s, inequality increased in terms of consumption, income, and distribution of capital (Sheahan 15).

Chile's political system is problematic as well, as its constitution has been largely untouched since Pinochet rewrote it in 1982. Its electoral laws in particular were written to keep Pinochet's opponents out of power, and thus some of the rules seem arbitrary and unfairly slanted in the modern age. Because Chileans have little faith in their political system, voter confidence is low. Instead, protests and demonstrations have become a popular vehicle to voice dissent in Chile.

With this thesis, I seek to understand the relationship between inequality and protests in Chile during the post-dictatorship period. I want to examine protests on a macro level. Instead of looking at individual rallies or marches, I will identify the root causes for protest movements to see what, if any, relationship they have with problems rooted in inequality such as repression and disparity of wealth. Though I do not believe that the pervasive inequality has caused all of the protests in Chile over its considerably tumultuous past, I do believe that since the end of the dictatorship, many of the protest movements in Chile have roots in the country's struggles with inequality. Though it is impossible to predict with any certainty the frequency of all protests in any given year, I want to examine the relationship between inequality and protests in different areas of Chile to see if high inequality led to a higher rate of protests.

Chile is host to a variety of protest movements. The education protests are one such wave of protests, but they are far from the only ones. Protestors have been calling for greater minority rights and more competent government for years. Before I make any sort of conclusions about current-day protests in Chile, I explore the history and causes of protests since the dictatorship because individual protests movements are so varied. I will also include a section on theory to examine more generally why people protest. After contextualizing both the level and types of inequality in Chile and the recent history of protest, I will turn to a more quantitative form of analysis.

In the quantitative section, I will examine data from the World Bank, and the UN Millennium Development Goal committee to examine the levels of inequality in the country. I will also use the World Bank and United Nations data to see how much progress Chile has made in overcoming some of its shortcomings in the education sector

since the beginning of the millennium. Lastly, I will run a regression to see if there is a relationship between access to education, and frequency of protests.

Inequality is certainly not a unique problem; it is persistent in both developed and developing societies. Why then, does it lead to protests, riots, and domestic conflict in some nations like Chile, while in other nations it does not? The answer is far from simple and it is a combination of political, economic, and cultural factors. In this thesis, I will attempt to show that protest culture in Chile is symptomatic of the underlying inequality in the country.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

All inequality in Chile is not the same, nor does it manifest at the same rate in all sectors. Scholars throughout the world attempt to express “inequality” in a country with the use of one number, the GINI coefficient, but the GINI often only scratches the surface of the many divisions in any given country as it is only a statistic. Though disparity of wealth is a strong indicator of underlying political and economic problems in the country, it often does not go far enough in explaining social or cultural partitions that may prevent a country from progressing.

In this section, I will look at three aspects of inequality. First, I look at inequality in purely economic terms and address Chile’s problems with income inequality and concentration of capital. Then, I look at Chile’s economic heritage to better understand the effect that neoliberal reforms had during the late 20th century. I will also attempt to gauge current Chilean feeling toward these reforms to better understand the economic concerns of modern day protestors.

Next, I will address political inequality. This is harder to quantify, but I can measure it through the World Values Survey and examination of Chile’s constitution and electoral laws. As a new democracy, Chile has overcome the hurdle of transitioning from an authoritarian government to a transparent and democratic one, but still has a long way to go in terms of institutions. I argue that the political infrastructure in the country perpetuates inequality and decreases overall faith in the system, and that this attitude leads to an increase in protest as Chilean citizens search for a better outlet to air their grievances. This section is particularly important because it helps link inequality and protest culture specifically in Chile.

The last form of inequality I will discuss is social inequality and the effect it has on education. The latest wave of protests in Chile has organized around a common theme: great access to secondary education. This by no means is a new topic of protest, but instead demonstrates the idea that Chileans see their society as unfairly rigged to benefit the wealthy. In this section, I will discuss the way Chile's education system is designed and why many Chileans dislike it. I hope to tie together Chile's struggles with education, social mobility, and minority rights in this section.

Economic Inequality

The easiest and most visible marker of economic inequality in most countries is income inequality and wealth disparity. By looking at fluctuations in Chile's GINI coefficient and by examining the concentration of land and wealth among Chilean citizens, we can glean an accurate picture of the economic health of the Chilean working class. In the early 2000s, Chile's GINI coefficient climbed as high as 0.57. The income of the richest 10% of Chilean citizens was greater than the total income of the bottom 80% of Chilean households (Lopez and Miller 2679). The income inequality is a result of the failed economic policies of the Chilean government earlier in the century. The mixed success and eventual cessation of the Import Substitute Industrialization model and the rapid privatization of many industries during the Pinochet administration damaged the economy in the long run and marginalized many average Chilean citizens.

The Import Substitution Industrialization economy policy was a way to declare economic independence from the countries of the global north. Though many Latin American countries were not directly involved in the two World Wars, they still suffered

as a result of the weak global market and worldwide inflation that it caused. In the period after the wars, many South American economies decided it was better to be self-sufficient and produce everything their citizens needed within the country. Import substitution focused on domestic production of many goods, state subsidization of large industries, and protectionist trade policies. Chileans focused on mining copper and nitrate and refrained from importing any good they could produce themselves. As a result, in the period after the war, the level of exports in Asian countries grew on average about 10% a year, while exports fell in Latin American countries by 1% (Alcántara, Paramio, Freidenberg, and Déniz 12). This considerably hurt GDPs throughout the region, but the situation became dire as a result of “insufficient internal savings” and a high rate of protectionism (12). The oil shocks were the last straw; industrialization was already difficult to maintain in Latin America, but a “brutal elevation of energy costs” was too much. Countries all over the region experienced “a reduction of demand and as a result, a decrease in wages and economic stagnation” (10). Import substitution also kept the Chilean economy from diversifying, because the economy had flourished by extracting raw materials and developing them within the country. Its dependence on the extraction of resources is still hurting them today, because the Chilean economy’s fate is still partially tied to the fortune of one or two industries. Chile remains “highly vulnerable to fluctuations in the world demand and price of [raw materials],” and is thus forced to maintain production at any cost. This cost usually falls heavily on the shoulders of the indigenous and working class population, who are paid a pittance for their work as costs of living are rising.

After Import Substitution, Chile saw the rapid adoption of neoliberal policies, overseen by the “Chicago boys,” Chilean economists trained at the University of Chicago. Chile’s authoritarian government felt that the only way to recover from the follies of the ISI model was to adopt capitalism as fast as possible and to integrate it into as many sectors as possible. Pinochet and the Chicago boys wished to open Chile to foreign trade, but participating in the international market system also meant opening each country to foreign investment, which initially was “concentrated in trade, shipping, railways, public utilities, and government loans” (Keen 202). Once the previously state-controlled industries were opened to investment, foreign multi-national corporations quickly bought the profitable industries (such as copper and nitrate) and gradually took control of most of the profitable enterprises in the country. This economic control eventually led significant political influence, which only made inequality worse. The richest families in Chile almost completely controlled the financial sector, and foreign interests controlled most of the capital in the country. It was extremely difficult for the average citizen to engage in entrepreneurial activities and the working class had little opportunity for social mobility. The economic prospects of the working class have not improved much since the Pinochet dictatorship; “the successive democratic regimes... have been unable and/or unwilling to reduce inequality” and to level the playing field between Chile’s superrich and the working class (Lopez and Miller 2769).

Chileans have protested their economic situations for years now, but due to the repressive and violent nature of the Pinochet regime, it was difficult to claim that the sole reason people were protesting during the 80s was due to economic inequality. More likely, economic inequality was an underlying cause for discontent, but it is more likely

that Chileans took to the streets to express their disapproval of the Pinochet regime's treatment of dissidents. However, since the fall of the regime and over the past ten or so years, it is easier to make the argument that Chileans are protesting the apparent inequality in their society. For example, a journalist interviewed one young protestor in Santiago in 2006 and asked him why he was vandalizing private property. His response was, "aquí hay dos Chiles, y yo odio al otro" or "here there are two Chiles, and I hate the other." The young man was expressing that he believes that there are "two Chiles," the Chile of the richest 10%, and the relatively working-class remainder. The rich live comfortably in a manner that rivals the rich of any developed country, but the working class suffers and openly resents the rich, a sentiment the youth clearly expressed when he claimed "yo odio al otro," or "I hate the other [Chile]" (Lopez and Miller 2769).

Political Inequality

Economic inequality is a far-reaching and obvious cause of dissent in Chile, but it is not any more important than the political problems that still plague the country. Before the Pinochet regime, Chile suffered from instability and extreme factionalism while Salvador Allende was president. After Allende was ousted in a violent, US-funded coup, Pinochet took power and rewrote the country's constitution in 1982. The constitution of 1982 was designed to perpetuate and strengthen Pinochet's power while eliminating opportunities for his opposition. The new constitution decreed, "that nine non-elected senators, four of them former military and police commanders, would sit alongside 26 (now 38) elected ones; it gave General Pinochet a Senate seat for life; and it deprived elected presidents of their right to dismiss military commanders-in-chief or the chief of

police” (Untying the Knot – The Economist). Reforms since have done away with the “senators for life,” but some of the more perplexing aspects of the constitution, such as the binomial electoral system, still endure.

The binomial system has been a consistent source of strife since its introduction in 1982. While the system seems like a small facet of the larger political system, electoral laws can profoundly affect party dynamics and influence the way voters feel about the political system. For example, the design of an electoral system can push a party system into favoring many small parties or do the opposite and encourage two or three large parties. A flawed electoral system can also make voters feel as if their vote does not matter, and lead to a decrease in political participation, or make voters feel as if they do not have a direct role in the decision making process of a given country. Since “the relevance of a party system lies... in how it reflects and in turn helps to mitigate or aggravate [the] tension” between the accumulation of capital and the distribution of wealth, a flawed electoral system can in turn make voters feel like they are not receiving enough benefits from their government (Barrett 2). This is exactly the case in Chile, where “each constituency elects two members to each house. To get both seats, a party or coalition must get double the vote of the runner-up. The centre-left coalition in power since 1990 has never won enough seats to change the constitution” (Untying the Knot). In short, a party only wins both seats if they receive double the vote of the opposition party. Chile’s binomial system leads to disproportionate representation throughout the country.

Due to this imbalance, parties have been forced to band together for support and success and many Chileans have little to no faith in the political process at all. In the

fifth round of the World Values Survey, one thousand respondents in Chile were polled in 2006 and asked how much confidence they had in their political parties. The majority of Chilean surveyed said that they either have “not very much” confidence in political parties or “none at all.” Only about 20% of respondents had “quite a lot” or “a great deal” of confidence in political parties (World Values Survey, Fourth Wave). In the most recent round of the survey, faith in parties stayed mostly the same. Of roughly a thousand respondents surveyed, the vast majority stated they had “not very much” faith in political parties, and many claimed that they had no faith at all (World Values Survey, Sixth Wave). Respondents had a similar attitude about the government: in 2006 (the fourth wave of the study), the second largest percentage of respondents had “not very much” faith in the Chilean government. By the sixth wave of the survey, taken between 2010 and 2014, the percentage stayed almost exactly the same. The data shows that not only do Chileans not have faith in their political parties to fulfill their basic functions, but they do not trust the parties after they have been elected into government either.

This lack of faith in political parties is alarming and significant when we evaluate the frequency of protests in the country. Political parties are important because they are the most efficient way to link the government with the citizens of a country. Richard Katz defines political parties as “an autonomous group of citizens having the purpose of making nominations and contesting elections in the hope of gaining control over governmental power through the capture of public offices and the organization of the government” (Katz 2006, 220). If the citizens of a country do not have faith in the country’s party system, they are less likely to try and engage in it and are more likely to seek other avenues to make their voices heard. According to Hans Daalder, a party

system, or more than one party, is necessary because it establishes a “legitimate opposition” while also facilitating “the process of inclusion of more and more groups in the political system” (Daalder 2001, 41). In Chile’s case, the citizens don’t trust the parties to serve as “legitimate opposition” to each other or the government, so they must oppose the government in other ways such as protests.

Social Inequality: Education and current day protests

While political inequality and economic issues are obvious sources of domestic conflict in Chile, social inequality is also an important root of the problem. The Chilean struggle for equal access to education, minority rights, and other basic social welfares existed during the Pinochet regime but endured into the newly democratized country. Because Pinochet enacted many Liberal reforms that chipped away the country’s social safety net, many Chileans wished for a return to more socialist policies. This push gradually gained momentum through the 90s and into the 2000s, and has found its most recent incarnation in the Chilean Education Movement.

The push for equal access to quality education was a recurring theme in Chile after Pinochet did away with free secondary education, but the movement began to pick up steam again in 2011. At that time, a group of Chilean students banded together to continue to protest the high tuition costs and lack of access to higher education in Chile. Before the Pinochet era, public education was free, or at the very least, state-subsidized. When Pinochet rose to power, the education sector was partially privatized along with several other industries. Though many countries throughout the world, the United States

included, still have privatized education systems, many Chileans resent the rising cost of secondary education because it was free at one point in Chilean history.

Nevertheless, Chile currently enjoys greater access to primary education than the vast majority of countries in the world. Statistics The World Bank reports that over 100% of children enjoy access to primary schooling. This inflated statistic includes children that have been held back or are traditionally too old to attend primary school. Despite the flaw in the statistic, this number still shows that the vast majority of Chilean children have access to and attend primary school. Over the past 10 years, Chile has provided the same level of access to primary school as most high-income OECD countries though it is considered a mid-income OECD country itself. In some years, Chile has outperformed many other OECD countries in providing primary education to children (World Bank Database). On a global standpoint, Chile appears to be doing very well in its education sector, but Chilean citizens remain unsatisfied because education becomes more difficult to attain the further a student progresses in school.

Objectively, Chile doesn't suffer from the same level of educational deprivation as many developing countries, but the country does have real problems with educational stratification. Many scholars argue that there is "persistent inequality" in Chile arising from the market reforms of the Pinochet area (Torche 316). Access to education remains more or less equal during primary school, but "there is a small but significant increase in inequality in the transition to secondary education" (Torche 316). This means that despite the fact that education franchises as a whole have expanded in Chile and countries like Chile (meaning that more universities and trade schools are available), "educational attainment has remained constant over the decades" (Torche 316). The prevailing factor

that influences educational attainment is still social background, meaning that lower-income students or first-generation college students are still those that are least likely to matriculate.

Lack of access to secondary education continues to make the social mobility necessary for equality difficult. Inequality, defined as “the distribution of resources at any point in time” is high in Chile as previously discussed because the country’s resources are in the hands of a few (Torche 424). Social mobility, defined in this context as upward movement through the social strata, is a tenet of most capitalist societies. However, mobility is difficult in societies where education is one of the only vehicles available for upward mobility (i. e., a transition from the working to the middle class). Education “increases the chances that someone with a particular social origin will attain a more rather than less advantageous [social] destination” and helps people overcome burdens placed on them due to their economic backgrounds and thus helps them break the cycle of poverty (Torche 425). High inequality causes “greater distance in terms of human, financial, cultural, and social resources across different origins” (425), but education helps level that distance by giving lower class citizens the opportunity to participate in the national discourse. However, much of the inequality in Chile is concentrated in the education sector, mobility is not impossible, but difficult for Chilean citizens. The lack of mobility and lack of access to education go hand in hand to make life difficult for the Chilean working class. Inequality becomes most problematic when avenues to overcome it (like education and a flourishing job market) are readily available. However, in Chile’s case, education is difficult to attain and so the lower class cannot always rise above their situation.

Because Chile has made the transition from an agrarian country to one that has a more diversified economy, its problems can no longer be fixed by land or market reform. When inequality was high in Chile during the 1960s and 1970s, the government instituted comprehensive land reform, where traditional haciendas were broken into smaller plots of land for individual proprietors. This reform decreased the “extreme land concentration” in the country, taking the land out of the hands of a few wealthy landowners and placing it back into the hands of individual Chileans. This did wonders for Chilean inequality in the short term, when Chile still relied heavily upon the land as a source of income. Market reform in the 80s again reduced inequality by increasing the number of business owners in the country thus allowing them a larger share of the capital available in the country. This still was not a complete success, however, since many Chilean business owners engage in “survival activities” and not the active accumulation of capital. Thus, the vast majority of capital in the country is still concentrated in the hands of the few, and no further market reforms can reduce this disparity (Torche 431). The answer, then, may lie in mobility through education. Experts have identified that the reallocation of resources isn’t the answer, but the creation of a larger volume of more specialized jobs may revitalize the country. However, this is only possible if every Chilean has an equal chance at a solid education.

Since 2011, the movement for free education has expanded at an exponential rate. Marches and protests are organized approximately once a week, and often the students engage in “paros” or “tomas,” which are extreme forms of protest that range from a refusal to attend class to the seizure of university buildings. In my own experience, my university, the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaiso, was in *paro* by my second

month there. Students refused to attend classes, choosing instead to keep up with their schoolwork on their own time and to protest high tuition costs. Within another month, many students had voted to progress to a *toma*, in which they lock down a university building and live in it for months at a time, refusing admittance to any university officials. Though my school did not participate in a *toma* that extreme, many of the buildings remained locked for days and I had to show my passport to the guards stationed at the doors to prove that I wasn't on the University staff and was required to continue attending classes. The New York Times described the Education Movement in its early days as a "Chilean Winter" – students engaged in hunger strikes, mass mobilizations, and were even subject to tear gas and water cannons (Barrionuevo)

The protest movement emerged from a feeling of marginalization, both within the university and in the education system as a whole. The students recognize that change is only possible with "the conscious effort of specific interest groups to adapt the University," but these conscious efforts often fall flat (Torres and Schugurensky 434). One leaders of the education movement explained that he and his fellow protestors "no ve[mos] un canal politico" because "la constitución y el sistema binomial lo prohíben," or "we don't see a political channel because the constitution and the binomial system prohibit it." This means that Giorgio Jackson, the aforementioned student leader, doesn't see a political channel that the protestors can use to demand change because the constitution and the binomial system prohibit it (Chile se Moviliza).

This inability to utilize the political system clearly shows that the political and economic inequality is beginning to divide society. The students see themselves as a completely different sector of society than those in power, and even consider themselves

marginalized to the extent that the system will not work for them. The students consider themselves marginalized even from the press; one student interviewed by al-Jazeera boldly claims “in Chile the media lies” (Fault Lines: Chile Rising). The same student expresses his concern over the unfair coverage when he states, “they are hitting my friends... the news doesn’t show it” (Fault Lines: Chile Rising). Chilean student protestors have attracted a large following in the two years they have been protesting, but the growth in the movement is largely due to word-of-mouth and foreign press.

The Chilean education protests are symptomatic of larger problems in Chilean society. The political and economic inequity affects all sectors of Chilean society, not just industry and governance. Chilean citizens do not feel as if they live in a society that affords them social mobility and instead feel as if there are “two Chiles” – one of the rich, and one for the rest. Instead of these two groups coming to a compromise, the divide between the groups is widening and “the perceived futility of any attempt to negotiate has spread feelings of disillusion” throughout the movement and the country (Guzman-Concha 410).

Protest culture in Chile has been alive and strong for decades now and is certainly not a recent phenomenon. However, the protests within the past two decades seem to be motivated by a different theme than those before and during the Pinochet administration. Under the dictatorship, protests were directly related to the repression and violence of the regime. Now that the regime has fallen, protests seem to reflect instead the underlying problems in Chilean society, most of which have roots in the political and economic inequality that arose from an inconsistent political system and many ill-advised reforms. Inequality has created a society in Chile that is sharply divided by class, but the existing

political infrastructure does not give average Chileans an efficient means by which to level the playing field.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY – WHY DO PEOPLE PROTEST?

Inequality is a problem in post-dictatorship Chile, but it certainly is not a unique problem. Inequality plagues even the most powerful of nations, the United States included. The GINI Coefficient in the United States wavers between 0.45 to over .5, a level that is similar to the Chilean one. Why then, do Chilean students take to the streets on an almost weekly basis while American ones do not? Why is it that the Chilean protests span generations, and are frequent and furious, while the American Occupy Wall Street movement fizzled as quickly as it started? It is impossible to find one reason why Chileans are more likely to protest than Americans. It could be because Americans have abundant access to a variety of media channels. It could be because Chileans don't trust the government or the governmental process after 17 years of a dictatorship. There are many underlying themes that cause protests in Chile, but they all have collective identity, common grievances, and relative deprivation at their root.

It may seem intuitive, but individual protests and more importantly, large-scale protest movements do not form unless the protestors are unified around a similar identity. This is why certain groups or sectors of society tend to protest together; "activists share definition of their situation" and thus are able to use those commonalities to organize. Protests gain traction when "shared affinity motivate[s] participation" and individual protestors buy into the larger collective identity. In this context, collective identity is defined as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection to a broader community" (Polletta and Jasper 285). This definition has twofold significance for this

thesis. First, it implies that a broader community with shared ideals must first exist as the foundation for any movement. Second, it also implies that an individual must actively identify or connect with this community. An individual protestor or participant must identify that they possess the common trait and link it to a larger community.

In Chile, it is easy to identify the collective identity or collective consciousness that many protestors choose to align with. There are various protest movements spanning the country, many of which have endured since the time of the dictatorship. Therefore, because there are well-organized protest movements, it is easy to see the collective identity those protestors rally behind. These identities may have emerged as a result of the movement or as the unifying factor behind it. Activists in the indigenous push for equal rights were able to identify with their indigenous heritage, and protestors in the student movement are able to unify around their shared student status. Collective identities are large, but not all encompassing. A collective identity exists by nature to contrast with another identity, which makes relative deprivation easier to identify and thus makes it easier for protests to form.

Protestors by themselves only form a small part of a larger collective identity; they are the “the tip of larger masses who feel that their interests and/or values are violated” (qtd in van Stekelenburg 225). Therefore, collective identities are necessary for protests to form, but the existence of a collective identity is not enough to lead to a protest. Simply put, “protestors are aggrieved, but not all aggrieved people protest” (225). Some other factor, then, must push people past identifying with a larger community to openly advocating on behalf for that community in the form of protest. Identifying common grievances within the community is the next step, but emotional investment in

those grievances is also important. The grievances create an environment in which “men are exposed to noxious stimuli that they cannot avoid or overcome,” that leads to frustration and a tendency to “strike out at their sources” (Jost, Chaikalis-Petritsis, Abrams, Sidanius, van der Toorn, and Bratt 198). Experts agree that unifying around an identity is the first step, but that identity must be suffering from sort of trial. Further, the existence of the identity or the trial is a necessary condition for a protest, but not a sufficient one. Referring back to the problem of the economic inequality and income disparity, this inequality by itself does not cause protests. North America is a salient example; its citizens, by virtue of living in a capitalist society “are more likely to tolerate extreme forms of economic inequality” (Jost et al 197). The wealth gap in the United States is considerable, but by itself was not enough to cause widescale protests on the same scale as Chile. Perception is key. Since protestors “respond to the world as they perceive and interpret it,” they become active only when the common grievance is perceived as too grave to “avoid or overcome” (van Stekelenburg 224).

Common identity and the identification of a common grievance both work hand in hand to create a societal group that is relatively deprived. Relative deprivation occurs when a group in society begins to compare themselves to another group in society rather than to society as a whole. Relative deprivation occurs among groups “when objective quality standards are unavailable,” and therefore, “satisfaction depends on how well reality meets a person’s expectations” (Schmitt, Wideman, and Maes 123). In other words, protestors compare themselves to another, more privileged social group, and then decide if they are “deprived” in comparison to that group.

Chile suffers from what is known as fraternal relative deprivation, rather than egoistic relative deprivation. Egoistic relative deprivation, as the name implies, occurs when individuals feel unfairly treated and they contextualize their unfair treatment by comparing themselves to other individuals. The protest movements that I am discussing are illustrations of fraternal relative deprivation, where “members of a social category... believe their group as a whole is denied a deserved outcome” (Schmitt et al 123). The formation of collective identity among the indigenous tribes and among Chilean students show that relative deprivation in the country is not being experienced solely on an individual level, but is pervading entire sectors of society. Many scholars theorize that egoistic relative deprivation is not enough to cause protest, but that the formation of a collective conscious and the identification of common grievances leads to a feeling of fraternal deprivation, and fraternal deprivation causes protests (Schmitt et al 123).

In the case of the education protests, many students are comparing themselves to super-wealthy Chileans in order to determine that they are in fact deprived. These students can see that the wealthy enjoy greater benefits than they do, as well as greater access to factors that could aid in social mobility, like education. Students, such as the one previously cited who believed there were “two Chiles,” identify themselves as relatively deprived because they can see that the “other” Chile is better off than the one in which they live (Lopez and Miller 2769).

In Chile, groups of protestors see themselves as relatively deprived, but they define this deprivation in terms of both income and opportunities. Protestors often see that they are relatively deprived of access to education or even access to higher-wage jobs. As a result, protests are not limited just to the urban working poor and the education

protests are no exception. Protests may begin among the urban working class, but “usually, these low-income groups combine with other groups” such as “middle-class consumers and business organizations” (Walton and Ragin 877). The widespread appeal of protest movements in Chile show that the issues people are protesting may not be static or even easily identifiable, but people protest because they feel they are being marginalized in favor of a small (elite) sector of society.

Income is the most obvious and most empirical way to measure relative deprivation. Shlomo Yitzhaki was among the first pioneers to quantify relative deprivation by arguing that there is an inverse relationship between a country’s Gini coefficient and the level of relative deprivation felt by its citizens. Yitzhaki and subsequent economists studying relative deprivation felt that income was an important way to contextualize relative deprivation because it is an “index of the individual’s ability to consume commodities” (Yitzhaki 321). Therefore, instead of seeing relative deprivation as a nebulous concept experienced only by large groups of people, Yitzhaki’s model allows us to understand why individuals seek community identities to form behind; it is because their common grievances are often rooted in concrete, monetary concerns. Therefore, Yitzhaki chooses to measure a person’s index of relative deprivation by calculating “the range of income for which he is deprived” against “the range of income for which he is satisfied,” resulting in “the sum of the deprivation inherent in all units of income he is deprived of” (322). Aggregating these individual indices of relative deprivation allows us to arrive at a figure for an entire society, or in this case, country like Chile. Yitzhaki also argues that the Gini coefficient, because it aggregates the economic inequality in a country, is a “quantification of the well-known theory of relative

deprivation” (324). Thus, looking at Chile’s GINI coefficient allows us to make some educated conjectures about relative deprivation in the country.

As previously discussed, Chile’s GINI coefficient has wavered at around 0.5 over the past three years (World Bank Database: GINI Index). This makes it not the most unequal country in South America (Columbia and Panama have similar or higher figures), but it is certainly high on the list. Therefore, we can postulate that since the GINI Coefficient is comparably high in Chile and objectively high for a developed country, the level of relative deprivation within the country must also be high. Because the GINI coefficient measures inequality on a macro scale, aggregate deprivation must be the type of relative deprivation that is high. In this case and the case of many other countries (such as India before the caste system was outlawed and agrarian China) deprivation grows into wider discontent. Relatively deprived citizens “[are] motivated to either change their membership,” meaning they are motivated to leave the country or at least leave the society, “change the dimensions of comparison, or he/she may be directed towards revolution for changing the existing social system” (Saha 36). In Chile, we can see a clear tendency towards a desire to “change the existing social system.”

This marginalization as a result of relative deprivation has more than just an economic impact; it manifests in the country’s electoral laws and politics as well. The inequality in the electoral system reflects the relative deprivation particularly well. Because it places unfair barriers in front of the opposition party more so than the incumbent party, it relatively deprives its supporters. Former Chilean president Ricardo Lagos’s first ministerial race illustrates this problem well. In 1989, Lagos ran for office in a relatively wealthy part of the country – the Santiago West district. Pinochet had been

removed from power, and Lagos had made a name for himself as a vocal Pinochet opponent. Running as a candidate for the newly instated Socialist party, Lagos seemed like the obvious choice for the seat. However, even though Lagos won a large majority of the vote, he lost the election because he had failed to procure double the votes of the candidate with the second-most votes and the seat went to his opponent. The binomial system was originally designed to protect the right, but endured into post-dictatorship Chile and now favors incumbents. Ultimately, the election would not damage Lagos's career as he would eventually become the Minister of Finance and later the President, but his failed senate bid is still infamous in Chilean history because it showed that the system is not just unequal, it blatantly favors the incumbent group. Along with the "changes that accompany democratic consolidation," Chilean political parties, particularly on the Left, had to make strategic choices to capture as many voters as possible since appealing only to the working class and poor was not enough to get them elected. The Concertación struggled to both "express the demands of the poor" and "implement neoliberal economic policies and make overtures to the business sector," two seemingly contradictory political agendas (Angell and Pollack 358).

This trend does not merely cause schizophrenic politics; because the party system is so fragmented, most Chilean people see that politics is a game for the wealthy and established, and that they are actively being deprived of their voice. By 1997, a mere 7 years after General Pinochet stepped down, "there was evidence that indifference and hostility to the political system was increasing" (359). A growing number of Chileans either refrained from voting, turned in blank ballots, or annulled their votes. The number of voters stayed relatively high for a number of reasons; "a well-entrenched party system

is still able to mobilise [sic] the support of substantial sectors of the electorate” and because after a long history of authoritarianism, voters would vote to “as an affirmation of support for democracy” (360). Chileans were voting, but without faith that the system would do anything to help them. Thus, disillusionment grew outward from the lower classes and began to seep into the middle classes. It is no surprise that in Chile, a country with “a strong tradition of urban community organization,” citizens of all socioeconomic levels saw taking to the streets in protest an effective way to incentivize change (Walton and Ragin 886).

Protests are a fairly common way to express dissent throughout the world. They are currently being used everywhere from Venezuela to Egypt to the Ukraine. Most protests, though geographically disparate, occur for the same reasons. They occur when a group of people unite behind a singular identity and then identify a common grievance. This marginalization proceeds from passive discontent to open protest when the members of the deprived community identify their grievance as too grave to continue to live under. Relative deprivation sets the state for protest, both on an individual level and a community level, but the tipping point is when a group feels disenfranchised in a such a way that conventional methods will not suffice to improve their situation. In Chile specifically, protests have emerged because of an individual feeling of economic deprivation and a fraternal feeling of disenfranchisement from politics and resources.

CHAPTER 3: A BRIEF HISTORY OF PROTESTS IN CHILE

Many of the protests currently occurring in Chile enjoy success in part because the protestors are standing on the shoulders of protest giants. Protests have long been a popular and legitimate way for citizens to air grievances in Chile and Latin America. Protest are popular because they allow people to force their governments to be more accountable in fear of the people “ris[ing] up and throw[ing] them out of office if dissatisfied” (Meirowitz and Tucker 478). Even under the Pinochet administration, when protesters were frequently punished with imprisonment, public beatings, and in some cases death, Chileans still united in the streets. Protests have always been the most potent tool in the activist’s arsenal because it allows them to use their “people power” to organize and call attention to their cause (Meirowitz and Tucker 479). In the Middle East, thousands of young people gathered in capital cities throughout the region to protest their tyrannical governments and eventually succeeded in removing dictators from power (Meirowitz and Tucker 478). In Argentina, the Madres del Plaza de Mayo gathered silently in Buenos Aires every Thursdays to call attention to the atrocities the Argentinean junta had committed. Eventually the Madres became so influential that modern political candidates sought their endorsements while running for office. The Madres still march today as a living reminder of the atrocities committed in the country so that they may never be repeated

For the purposes of this paper, I will be focusing on protest movements that occurred after Pinochet fell from power. The reasons for this are numerous: first, it is nearly impossible to find complete data on the frequency of protests because Pinochet did not want it known. Second, because I am interested in how protests complement and struggle against the political process in Chile, it would be inappropriate to analyze protest data from before the country became a modern democracy.

Since Pinochet, there have been various protest movements throughout Chile, but for the purposes of examining the effect of political and social inequality on protests, I plan on focusing on two broad themes. First, I want to examine the push for minority and indigenous rights because it clearly fits within the theme of relative deprivation. The struggle for minority rights within majority-ruled societies is the cause of conflict in many parts of the world, and in Chile, like many other Latin American countries, the struggle has turned bloody. The second sector of protests I want to examine will be the push for education reform over the past 20 years. The recent wave of these protests has sought to win free secondary education for Chileans, but the push for a more opportunities through education has been an underlying theme for many years. I believe examining these two themes will encapsulate much of the conflict in the country and allow me to make educated generalizations about the root of protests in modern-day Chile.

Minority Rights

The Mapuche, Chile's indigenous population, comprise about 8% of Chile's total population and have suffered many of the same indignities that as Native American

population in the United States. Historically, the Mapuche have lived in the Auranca region of Chile and had deep ties to the land, but the growth in Chilean mining and energy industries has threatened their way of life. In 1993, the new Concertación government passed the Indigenous People Act, guaranteeing that the Mapuche would have political representation and that the government would respect their rights to own property, but the final version of the act was toothless and didn't afford the Mapuche the protection under the law they deserved. Furthermore, construction companies, lumber companies, and urban expansion pushed many Mapuche off their land. As of 2011, the Mapuche own only 300,000 hectares of land (Spain and Gatehouse). This disenfranchisement coupled with underrepresentation has encouraged the Mapuche to demonstrate against the government.

The Mapuche protests crescendoed during Michele Bachelet's first term as president, during the early 2000s. Though Bachelet was and is extremely popular among Chileans, her relations with the indigenous population of the country are rocky at best. Bachelet jailed more Mapuche dissidents than any of her predecessors, and her administration was accused of using an anti-terrorism law to discriminate against Mapuche protestors. During the 1980s, Pinochet was accused of using this same law to quell Mapuche dissent, and Bachelet's administration came under international scrutiny for their treatment of the Mapuche. Unsurprisingly, the Mapuche rebelled at the abuse the government and big businesses leveled against them and protested, often violently (Spain and Gatehouse).

Since Bachelet left power, the relationship between the government and the Mapuche has not gotten much better. As recently as Columbus Day of this year, Mapuche

protestors gathered in Santiago and clashed violently with the police. An estimated 15,000 Mapuche participated in the march to, many of them affirming that Columbus Day brought them “nothing to celebrate” (Chile Indigenous Groups Mark Columbus Day With Protests). This protest shows that even after decades of protest and conflict with the government, their situation has not improved. The Mapuche feel that they are “frequently marginalized by those who set the terms of the discussion” in national politics and in academic settings (Richards 201). Because they feel this marginalization, the Mapuche in this case can be considered both relatively and objectively deprived. When they protest and call attention to the difference between how the government treats them compared to the other 92% of the Chilean population, they show the world that they do not enjoy the same status in Chilean society. This deprivation caused by the underlying inequality in Chilean society keeps the Mapuche from utilizing political or judicial channels to better their situation and forces them into a violent conflict with those in power.

Equal Opportunities in Education

The Education Movement, as previously discussed, has many of the same aims as the Mapuche struggle for independence because it is also a fight for equal opportunities and resources, though its campaign casts a wide net to encompass all Chilean students. Students in Chile have been protesting almost as long as the Mapuche – in 1960, one scholar outlined the chronic unhappiness of the Chilean student going back 50 years. In 1960, Frank Bonilla argued that many of the problems Chilean universities were facing were due to “chronic poverty; less a result of the indifference of the government than of

the perennial economic difficulties in Chile” (Bonilla 312). Today, Chile can hardly make the same argument as it has seen decades of positive economic growth, yet students are still unhappy with the University system. The Education Movement is significant not because it is novel, but instead because “it is the result of the combination of long-term historical factors with causes that relate to the political process, and the presence of triggers” (Guzman-Concha 409).

No “single variable” can account for the root of the education movement (Guzman-Concha 409). As early as 1960, there was a push for “free” education from the Catholic church and other socially conservative groups, but by “free” they meant “sectarian and free from government supervision,” the opposite of the current goals of the Chilean Education Movement, which campaigns for government subsidized secondary education (Bonilla 313). Even though the specific goals of the students have changed due to the country’s different political climate, student unrest is not a new phenomenon in Chile because the underlying problems have not changed much.

The current Chilean education movement thus piggybacks on decades of protests organized around the same theme. At this point, whether or not they achieve their concrete goal of attaining free secondary education for all Chileans falls secondary to their goal of building awareness of the underlying inequalities that persist in Chile. The students “called for new institutional arrangements to improve the democratic system” as much as they called for the concrete reforms that form their platform. That the protestors have called global attention to their plight and have been publicly acknowledged by the ruling elite in their country is in itself a significant feat.

During my stay in Chile, I was fortunate enough to see Aleida Guevara, daughter of revolutionary Che Guevara, speak at the University of Valparaiso. During her talk, she addressed the student protestors present that day, urging them to continue their fight, expressing her approval of their message, and even going so far as to declare that her father would have been proud of them. I could see the effect that her words had on many of the students present. They were visibly energized; the applause and cheering after she expressed her support lasted for minutes. For months I had wondered why the Chilean Education Movement enjoyed the success that it did; its mission seemed futile and it was extremely disorganized. At that moment I understood: they were protesting not for an immediate overhaul of the system, but as an extended campaign to raise awareness of their plight. In the long run, Chile may never enjoy free secondary education, but in the short term, “the students’ movement ask[s] why certain matters could not be deliberated and decided beyond the boundaries of those groups with access to political institutions,” thus addressing inequality, the root of most problems in Chilean society.

CHAPTER 4: DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, I will be culling data from a variety of sources to evaluate two things. First, I will be looking at access to education across the country. By looking at primary school completion rates and university enrollment throughout the country, I will be able to contextualize the Chilean disappointment with their education system. Throughout this section, I will periodically compare Chilean data with data from Argentina and Uruguay, Chile's neighbors that have followed a similar path of development. During the 20th century, all three countries experienced a transition from democracy to dictatorship and then an eventual return to democracy. Specifically over the past 50 years, all three countries threw off a dictatorial yoke and slowly transitioned into modern democracies and post-industrial economies. Economically, these countries also have similar roots. All three have experimented with bouts of socialism and then quickly returned to a neo-liberal model. Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay all underwent this process at slightly different times and manners, but the end result produced countries with similar political and economic structures.

By looking at access to education both within Chile and in comparison to its neighbors Argentina and Uruguay, I can measure the level of objective deprivation in the country. If Chileans are objectively worse off than their neighbors, or if they suffer from low primary school completion or university enrollment, I can attribute part of the cause for the recent wave of protests to that phenomenon. However, if Chile appears to have a

robust education system compared to its neighbors and is performing at the level an OECD country is expected to perform, the root cause of protests may be a more general phenomenon such as relative deprivation.

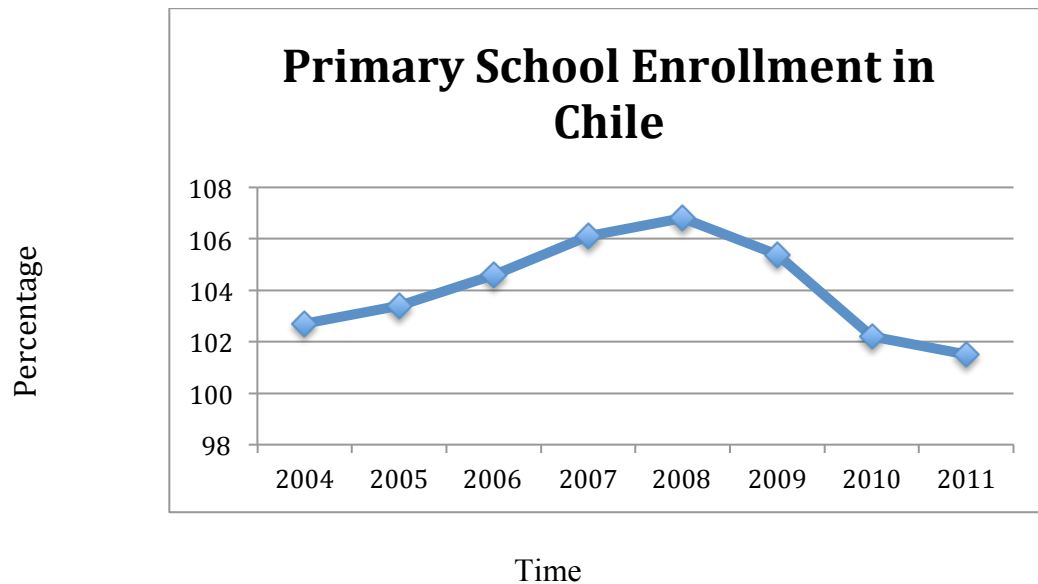
Finally, I plan on running a regression to calculate the relationship between the frequency of protests and inequality. I will use the frequency of protests in a given year as my dependent variable, and the country's GINI coefficient for my independent variable. Starting in 1994, I will see how, if at all, the country's GINI coefficient has changed over the past 15 or 20 years. Then, I will look at the number of protests or anti-government demonstrations over the same period. I will run a regression to see if the GINI coefficient is at all correlated with the number of protests in a year. I hypothesize that if the level of relative deprivation in a country is low, the frequency of protests in a given year will also be low. This hypothesis will tell me whether or not Chileans protest due to objective deprivation (the clear absence of resources) or relative deprivation caused by the factors I discussed earlier.

Access to Education

Because of Chile's robust GDP, it is considered a middle-income OECD country. Among such countries with similar incomes, indicators such primary school completion and tertiary school enrollment can be used to gauge the overall health and potential for growth in a country. Specifically in the context of this paper, I want to look at primary school completion rates to see how they compare to secondary and tertiary school completion rates within Chile. I will look at how these rates compare over time to see if

Chile has an objective problem with education. I will also briefly examine survey data to see how Chileans feel about the overall state of their education system.

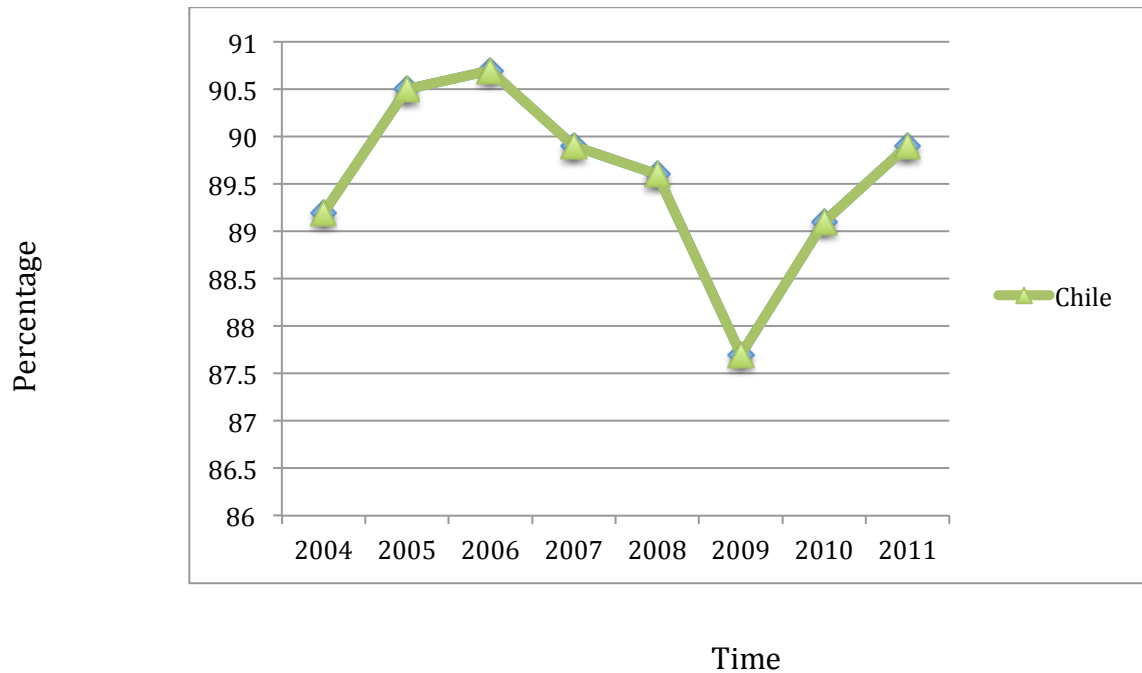
Graph 1



Source: World Bank Database

This chart shows the gross enrollment rate of primary students in Chile from 2004-2011. Percentages over 100% show children that have been held back or dropped out to return to finish their schooling. Thus, Chile seems to enjoy full primary school enrollment, and most, if not all appropriately aged children are enrolled in some type of primary schooling program. Though Chile seems to suffer from an excess of over and under aged students, students seem to at least have access to a primary school education.

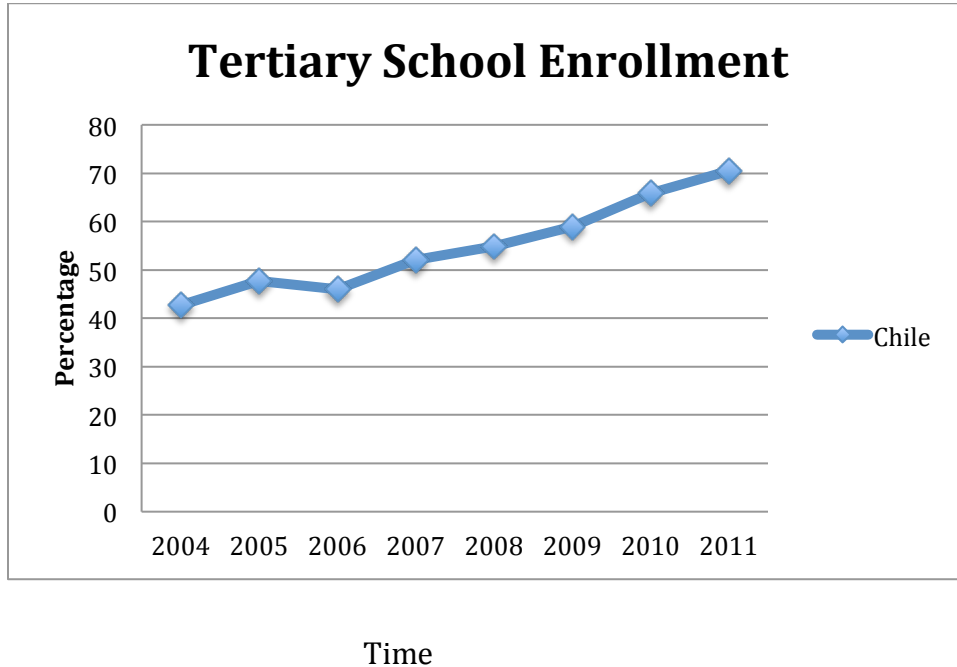
Graph 2 – Secondary School Enrollment in Chile



Source: World Bank Database

The second chart shows the rate of secondary school enrollment in both Chile from 2004 to 2011, showing that between 10-15% of the secondary school aged population is not enrolled in school. This is a significant drop from the previous chart, which showed that most children were enrolled in primary school. Though Chile struggles to keep children in school between the primary and secondary stage, students seem to at least have access to the education if they want it. The problem then does not manifest in the early stages of education. Protestors are aggrieved because of the quality of and access to secondary and tertiary schools.

Graph 3



Source: World Bank Database

Graph 3 is the most important chart thus far because it is the only one to address enrollment in universities, or tertiary schools. Since the bulk of this paper has discussed the opportunities (or lack thereof) for Chilean students to pursue undergraduate degrees, this data is particularly enlightening. This chart shows the percentage of tertiary school enrollment in Chile.

What is interesting about this chart is that Chile has seen tertiary school enrollment greatly increase over the past ten or so years. Chile reaches about 70% enrollment by 2011, the beginning of the current Education Movement. In context then, these numbers make it difficult to understand why Chileans have such profound disappointment with their education system if tertiary school enrollment has been on the

uptick over the past decade. Thus, the problem must be less about enrollment and more about overall satisfaction in the system.

Survey data supports this claim. In survey conducted by the organization Latinobarometro in 2011, 34% percent of Chileans surveyed claimed that university education had worsened over the past ten years. Nearly as many (34%) claimed that it had stayed the same. Only 20% claimed that it had gotten better, meaning that over 60% of respondents had not seen improvement in university education even though enrollment had increased. Furthermore, when asked who should pay for university education, over 90% of respondents stated that either the state should pay for it entirely, or that the state should pay more than the family. 1.2% of respondents believed that the family alone should pay for university education (Latinobarometro: quien cree usted debe pagar la educación universitaria?). Chileans were also surveyed about whether or not they think a university education allows a person to eventually gain meaningful employment, and over 80% said yes (Latinobarometro: La formación universitaria permite acceder a un buen trabajo). This shows that Chileans also understand the link between education and social mobility, but believe mobility through education is difficult to maintain because of its high cost.

The survey data and the raw enrollment numbers reveal the problems with the Chilean education system and some of the reasons for discontent. Enrollment has increased in Chile, but overall satisfaction with the system has not. Chileans are dissatisfied with the education system because they firmly believe that the state should pay for university education as it once did. This explains the disparity between the increase in university enrollment over the past decade and the development of the

education movement; more Chileans are attending university, but these Chileans are also unhappy about the price they are paying for it. Since Chileans also believe that a university education is a necessary prerequisite for a well-paying job, it stands to reason that they would be upset at having to pay large sums of money in order to get a job that would lift them out of the working class. Protests, then, could be arising out of frustration with a system that makes it difficult to rise through the ranks of society.

Frequency of Protests

As previously discussed, protests are fairly frequent in Chile. Though the subject of the protest and the size may vary, protest as a medium for expression or dissent can be used as frequently as weekly. In this section, I will first use the World Value Survey to get a sense of how often Chileans participate in various types of political action. Then, I will track Chile's GINI coefficient over the past decade to look for any fluctuation in inequality. Lastly, I will run a regression to evaluate the relationship between frequency of protests and the level of inequality in the region.

The World Values Survey reports that many Chileans engage in some type of political action. 37% of respondents stated that they have signed a petition or would sign a petition in the future, and 17% of respondents said they have signed a petition recently. About 14% of respondents said they would participate in a boycott, or that they have participated in a boycott in the past. Most importantly for this paper, 36% of respondents stated that they had either joined in a peaceful demonstration in the past, or that they would join in a peaceful demonstration in the future (World Values Survey: Fourth Wave). Clearly, Chileans are not strangers to protest and are very willing to use

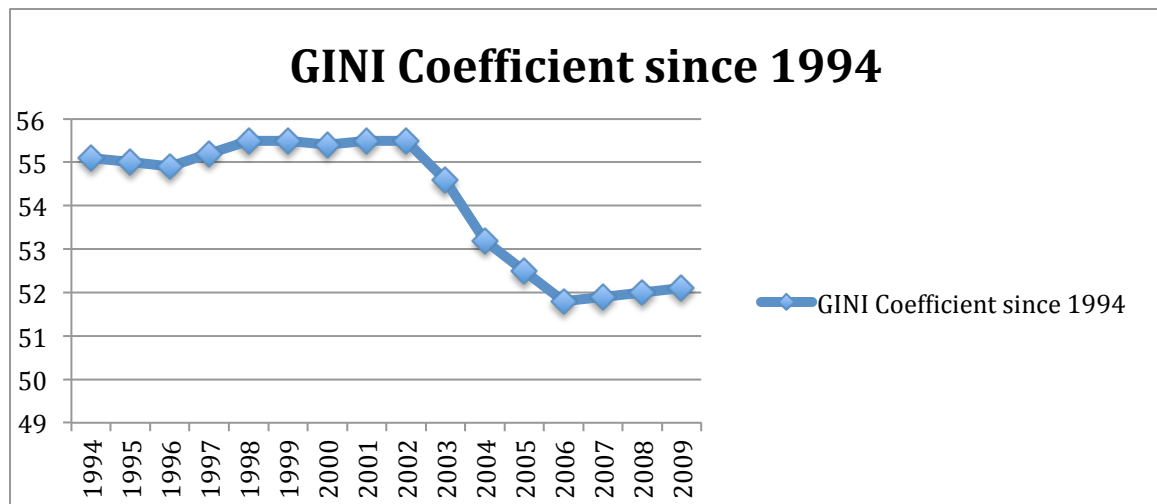
demonstrations as a medium to communicate their grievances. Willingness aside, measuring protests is a difficult activity. Since most protests occur spontaneously, measuring the number of participants or even defining what constitutes a protest is difficult. It is even harder when drawing the line between what constitutes a protest, what constitutes a riot, and what crosses the line into revolution.

For the purposes of this paper, I'll be using the Cross-National Time Series Archive distributed by Databanks international for data on the frequency of protests. This database compiles several indicators of political violence and dissent along with indicators that measure development. I'll be using the variable "Anti-Government Demonstrations" rather than the variables that measure riots or revolution. The reason I chose to use the Anti-Government Demonstrations variable is because it describes gatherings of people that protest governmental policies, and because it more closely correlates with the peaceful demonstration variable I analyzed above. I chose not to use the variable for riots because they are definition violent and usually involve a clash between authorities and civilians. I chose instead to examine anti-government demonstrations rather than measure the variable that describes a phenomenon that is often an uncontrolled last resort.

I'll be comparing this data on anti-government demonstrations to data from the World Bank about Chile's GINI index over the past 20 years. I have spoken about the GINI index extensively over the course of my paper, but to review, the GINI index not only measures the level of income inequality in the country, but can also be used as a measure of relative deprivation. Unfortunately, the World Bank has incomplete data regarding Chile's GINI coefficient, but it provides the GINI coefficient for roughly every

other year since 1994. Where a value for a certain could not found, I have averaged the GINI coefficient for the year before and the year after to arrive at a GINI that could reasonably predict the level of inequality in the country that year.

Graph 4: GINI Coefficient in Chile from 1994-2009



Source: World Bank Database

As the chart above shows, the GINI coefficient in Chile is currently high, but it is not as high as it was during the early 90's. In fact, Chile's GINI coefficient seems to have steadily declined over the past 20 years. In the early 90's, in the period immediately succeeding the dictatorship, Chile's GINI coefficient was around 55 to 56, which shows a significant level of inequality. In the early 2000s, the GINI dipped by about 5 percentage points, showing that income inequality is slowly and gradually decreasing in Chile. Though the decrease is only about 5 percentage points, this is significant enough to say that Chile is gradually becoming a more equal society.

This also shows that the level of relative deprivation in Chile is slowly decreasing in Chile. Thus, because I hypothesize that protests are high when perceived relative

deprivation in a country is high, we can expect that the level of protests has similarly tapered since the early 90s. I ran a regression in SPSS using the number of anti-government demonstrations in a year as the output (y variable) and the GINI coefficient as the x variable. Since the database I used provided data for as early as 1950, I chose to start the regression starting at 1994 and lasting until 2009.

Results

When I ran the regression, the results were not significant. I believe this can be attributed to the lack of variation in the “anti-government demonstrations” variables. This particular variable did not show a persistent increase or decrease over the time span I was examining. Furthermore, there was not much variation in the GINI variable either. Chile’s GINI coefficient only declined for a span of about 4 years, and the number of anti-government demonstrations tended to waver between 0 and 1. I believe this lack of variation can be attributed to the fact that it is difficult to measure and classify protests. It is almost impossible to count every formal and informal march and demonstration held in the country. For example, solely in my brief tenure of 5 months in Chile, I was able to witness 4 different organized marches that, because of the number of students in attendance and the unification of their identity and message, I would classify as a protest. I heard of many more occurring in more remote parts of Chile. However, this particular database does not reflect how often formal and informal demonstrations are used, and cannot deliver accurate results. Therefore, in order to conduct a regression that would deliver meaningful results, I would need far more extensive protest data. The results of this regression are below:

Figure 1
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	Year > 1993 (Selected)			
1	.117 ^a	.014	-.076	.932

a. Predictors: (Constant), GINI Coefficient Since '94

Coefficients^{a,b}

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-3.719	11.694		-.318	.756
GINI Coefficient Since '94	.084	.214	.117	.390	.704

a. Dependent Variable: Anti-Government Demonstrations

b. Selecting only cases for which Year > 1993

Regardless of the lack of extensive protest data, I ran another regression with university enrollment as the X variable rather than GINI coefficient in order to see if access to education, a variable with more variation, was a more accurate prediction than the GINI coefficient would be. These were the results:

Figure 2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.247 ^a	.061	.032	83.387

a. Predictors: (Constant), Anti-Government Demonstrations

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	81.632	15.021		5.435	.000
Anti-Government Demonstrations	7.597	5.191	.247	1.463	.153

a. Dependent Variable: University Enrollment {1000}**

This model did not yield significant results either, which leads me to believe that the absence of extensive and varied protest data will make it difficult to design a model that will produce significant results. However, the lack of protest data does not undermine the overall link between relative deprivation and protests. Many minority groups in Chile, united by their common identity and grievances, choose to take to the streets to express dissent. Economic (income) inequality may not be the sole cause, but coupled with forms of political and social inequality, the reason for grievance is clear. Chileans protest because they feel they cannot trust their government, because there is no immediate way to close the wealth gap, and because their political history has left them with structural problems with no easy solution.

CONCLUSIONS

Analyzing survey data and running two regressions led me to believe that the relationship between protests and inequality is more complicated than one expressed by a mathematical model. Though my results were not as conclusive as I hope, it still allowed me to make several conclusions about the state of education in Chile and the level of inequality in the country. It also gave me insight into why people protest and why protest is considered a legitimate form of political expression.

I found that in order for protestors to organize and form larger protest movements, several factors have to exist. First, protestors must rally around a common identity. In Chile, protestors have rallied around the identity of being a student, of being part of a minority group, or of being repressed. These groups, once they have identified what aspects of their identity they have in common, must then form around a common grievance. Organizing around a common grievance is what allows protestors to cross the line from thought to action – identifying a problem and believing that only “people power” can overcome it is what leads to protests (Meirowitz and Tucker 479). The survey data that I consulted also showed that enough people have protested in the past and would be willing to protest in the future to show that Chileans believe protests are a legitimate way to voice concerns.

I also learned why the state of the education system has caused conflict in Chile over the past decade. University enrollment has increased, but most average Chileans seem to believe that it is still cost-prohibitive. A large chunk of the Chilean population

does not believe that the education system has improved in the post-dictatorship period. Chileans also recognize that education is necessary for social mobility and the attainment of a good job, but are unwilling to pay the high fees associated with university tuition and believe the state should shoulder the responsibility. Chileans also think that the education system does not uniformly benefit all sectors of society. When asked if they believe that the education system offers more, less, or equal opportunities to all social sectors now compared to five years ago, 37% of those surveyed, the plurality of respondents, stated that they believed that it offers less opportunities (Latinobarometro: Comparado con hace cinco años atrás ¿cree Ud. que el sistema educativo de su país ofrece más, menos o iguales oportunidades a todos los sectores sociales). This means that respondents believed that the education system does not offer the same opportunities to the working class as it does the upper class. Protestors in the education movement are fundamentally protesting for equal opportunities for all Chileans.

Last, I found that inequality in Chile is more multifaceted than the GINI coefficient shows. Ultimately, the GINI is no more than a calculated statistic meant to measure income inequality. It is useful to track how income is dispersed throughout a country, and it is particularly useful in Chile because it shows how the neoliberal model affected country. However, inequality in Chile is also apparent in its social and political sectors as well. Indigenous groups in Chile still do not enjoy the same opportunities as the rest of Chile. Education is still easier to attain for the wealthy and privileged than the working class. The political system and the electoral laws still unfairly protect incumbents and can often be confusing. Many survey respondents in both the World Values Survey and the Latinobarometro surveys report that they have little confidence in

the state and not much faith in the government (Latinobarometro: Confianza en el estado).

It appears that Chileans use protests not as a last result, but as a way to have a dialogue with their government. One student interviewed in a documentary about the Chilean Education Movement said that he protests because “el sistema politica no daba lo que queremos” or “the political system did not give us what we wanted” and that he and his fellow protestors must use other means to capture the government’s attention (Chile Se Moviliza). Chileans protest as a way to highlight the problems in society, and as a way to construct a better tomorrow.

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